

Chicagoand Bicycle Federation



FUTURE CHALLENGES

Industrial expansion, urban sprawl, increasing numbers of vehicles traveling Interstate highways, and pollution prevention all offer challenges to Region 7 as well as the other nine regions which make up the Environmental Protection Agency. World population hit 6 billion in 1999 – actually doubling since 1960. Credit the increase to people living longer and fewer infant deaths.

Industrial expansion and urban sprawl are posing additional air quality management challenges to Region 7's air program and our states' environmental agencies. Urban sprawl in the U.S. doubled in the 1990s. In a five-year period – 1992 to 1997 – developers took 16 million acres of land at a rate of 3.2 million acres yearly. Compare it to the ten-year period between 1982 and 1992 when the yearly rate was 1.4 million.

New research indicates some of the air quality health-based standards are not adequate for protection. Pending the results of ongoing legal deliberations regarding these standards, millions of Region 7 residents may be added to those who live in areas with unhealthful air. Three years of data collection on particulate matter is needed. Particulate matter and ozone remain as future challenges.

Air toxic emissions and exposures are largely uncharacterized in Region 7. The region must improve its toxic modeling and monitoring to evaluate the problems and work with national efforts to reduce these toxic emissions. Success depends on developing air quality plans in partnership with impacted communities. Managing emerging health and environmental threats will be the challenge to add to already achieved successes. The Ozone Consortium in Region 7 explores voluntary transportation and fuels planning measures to prevent violations of the health-based standard.

The air program in Region 7 will seek to meet EPA's National Strategic Goals to improve air quality for citizens living in areas that do not meet air quality standards for carbon monoxide, sulfur dioxide, lead and nitrogen dioxide by 2005; and to improve air quality for those areas not meeting the air quality standards for ozone (smog) and particulate matter by 2010.

Region 7's toxic emissions are created by motor vehicles and small facilities or other commercial activity. Fuel strategies and pollution prevention initiatives will be important to achieve the national goal: a 75 percent reduction from 1993 levels of toxic air emissions to reduce public health threats by the year 2010.

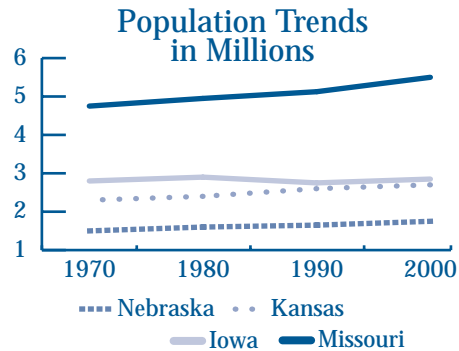
This four-state region has extensive agricultural activity – more than 120 million acres under cultivation – and tied to it is the issue and challenge of sustainable development. Sustainable development adds new questions and considerations to everyday decisions: What are the long-term impacts, and have environmental impacts been incorporated into the decisions as well?

Region 7's water programs division administers the pesticides program. During 1999, our states conducted 3,800 pesticide inspections. A most challenging enforcement issue is complaints that sprays drift to adjoining properties instead of an intended field or to a neighboring home, causing physical exposure or foliage damage. These misapplications result in enforcement either by the state or Region 7.

More fully characterizing the extent and nature of water pollution through improved monitoring programs presents a major challenge to Region 7. This will mean helping to build monitoring consortiums in each state that have adequate resources and effective strategies appropriate for each state.

The Iowa legislature appropriated \$1 million and established a monitoring council to revise its monitoring strategy. Members of the Kansas Biological Survey collect and store databases through the

Central Plains Center for BioAssessment. Kansas exchanges information between scientists, government officials and the public on water quality.



Through a memorandum of understanding, Missouri will combine databases and expertise of its Department of Natural Resources with the Department of Conservation to conduct monitoring on a three-year cycle. Nebraska's Department of Environmental Quality is in its third year of a five-year rotating basin cycle that depends upon random water sampling.

Region 7 must work with other federal, state and local agencies to respond to natural and man-made disasters. EPA and our partners must be prepared to act with a coordinated response to floods, earthquakes, and even if necessary, terrorist attacks.

One of the most recent exciting industry/public/government partnerships is a voluntary effort to improve chemical safety and emergency

preparedness within Wyandotte County, Kansas, where the Region 7 office is located. These efforts have resulted in a chemical safety guidebook for the community.

The idea initially came out of an EPA compliance assistance workshop, and from it, the formation of the Wyandotte County Coalition for Chemical Safety. In addition to local companies, the coalition includes the American Red Cross, Kansas University Medical Center, United Government of Wyandotte County, Kansas City, Kansas and the EPA.

The guidebook contains information on emergency notification procedures as well as evacuation plans. Distribution of the guidebook has been through public forums including a local health and safety fair during the 1999 Earth Day weekend.

In considering future challenges, we must continually evaluate our health-based standards using strong science and the best technology. We must use new technology to reduce pollution from current sources. Chemicals must be evaluated for impacts on both people and places.

Regional Office

The new Environmental Protection Agency Region 7 office building, located in Kansas City, Kansas, is an excellent example of a public/private partnership for reuse and greening of a former Brownfields property. The new EPA Regional Office building boasts an expansive view of the confluence of the Kansas and Missouri Rivers, and the spectacular skyline of Kansas City, Missouri. It was once the site of an abandoned hotel. Historically, the property was also home to a gas station, tin shop, battery repair facility, slaughterhouse, furniture shops, and a paint store. The degraded condition of the property prior

to redevelopment, in addition to its former historical uses, supported the perception that it was contaminated with hazardous materials. This perception hindered reuse of the property. However, an environmental assessment of the property detected only low levels of lead contamination that were below any action levels.

Working on a cost-constrained project, Region 7 was able to obtain a design, materials and products for the new building that met various green criteria such as energy efficiency, recycled material content, and less toxic products. As an outgrowth of that effort, the EPA green team members continued to



work on assembling green concepts, and developed an accountability method to make contractors for federal buildings consider these concepts.

Directory of State Environmental and EPA Region 7 Offices

**Iowa Department of
Natural Resources**

Henry A. Wallace Bldg.
502 East 9th St.
Des Moines, IA 50319-0034
(515) 281-5918
(515) 281-8895 (Fax)
www.state.ia.us/dnr/

**Kansas Department of Health
and Environment**

400 SW 8th St., Suite 200
Topeka, KS 66603-3930
(785) 296-1529
(785) 368-6368 (Fax)
www.kdhe.state.ks.us

**Missouri Department of
Natural Resources**

P.O. Box 176
Jefferson City, MO 65102-0176
(573) 751-3443
(573) 751-7627 (Fax)
www.dnr.state.mo.us

**Nebraska Department of
Environmental Quality**

1200 N St., Suite 400
P.O. Box 98922
Lincoln, NE 68509-8922
(402) 471-2186
(402) 471-2909 (Fax)
www.deq.state.ne.us

**U.S. Environmental
Protection Agency,
Region 7**

901 N. 5th St.
Kansas City, KS 66101
(913) 551-7000
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